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Governor's Workforce Panel Announces \$100,000 to Give Wisconsin the Edge in Advanced Manufacturing

Wisconsin is first state to adopt national standards

The Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) today moved Wisconsin to the forefront in advanced manufacturing by adopting new national skill standards and awarded \$100,000 to workforce development boards throughout the state. The boards will use the money to work with area manufacturers to test, train and certify production workers.

"Wisconsin's workers are the best and we are determined to see that our workforce remains highly-trained and highly-skilled so that our employers can compete and succeed globally," said Governor Jim Doyle. "I'm proud that Wisconsin is the first state to adopt these standards and I commend the Council's actions to keep our state at the forefront of technology."

The Council's vote followed a presentation on the cutting-edge approach to training and certifying workers for high end jobs by Jim McCaslin, President and Chief Operating Officer of Harley-Davidson Motor Company. McCaslin is Chairman of a national, industry-led group called the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC). The MSSC developed standardized skill sets so workers can compete at the high end in today's global economy.

"Adopting these standards will help put Wisconsin a big step ahead of other states in advanced manufacturing," said Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman. "We are mounting a collaborative effort with the state's technical colleges to train our workers, which sends a clear signal to the state's employers, our workers and the competition."

"The MSSC System provides the industry with a new set of tools to ensure that both new and incumbent workers are flexible, trainable and highly motivated 'knowledge workers' in the high-performance work organizations of the 21st century," Jim McCaslin said

With the MSSC Certification System, new and incumbent workers can have their skills assessed and structure training accordingly. State Job Centers and the Wisconsin Technical College System will implement the new standards into their curriculum and provide workers with the training necessary to achieve certification – their passport in the world of advanced manufacturing.

Milwaukee Area Technical College, Gateway Technical College, Moraine Park Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Stout are accredited by McCaslin's group as MSSC assessment, training and certification centers. Waukesha County, Northeast Wisconsin, Chippewa Valley, Mid-State and Northcentral Technical Colleges are in the process of being certified.

The Governor-appointed Council on Workforce Investment plays an advisory role to the Governor and the Secretary of DWD. In keeping with Governor Doyle's *Grow Wisconsin* initiative, the Council focuses on investments that will benefit the state, its businesses, and its residents. This includes increasing education, skills and wages; focusing on the future economy; making smart and strategic regional decisions; and fostering entrepreneurship.

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